DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 168 400 HE 011 072

AUTHOR Luciano, Ann C.
TITLE College Preference Survey: A Research Component in Marketing Higher Education.
INSTITUTION College of St. Rose, Albany, N.Y.
PUB DATE 14 Oct 78
NOTE 16p.; Paper presented at the annual conference of the North East Association for Institutional Research (5th, Pennsylvania State University, October 12-14, 1978)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Career Planning; Church Related Colleges; College Administration; *College Choice; College Environment; College Faculty; College Students; Employment Services; Higher Education; High School Students; *Marketing; Publicize; *Public Relations; School Community Relationship; Secondary School Counselors; Student Employment; Student Interests; *Student Opinion; *Student Recruitment
IDENTIFIERS *College of Saint Rose NY; *Institutional Image

ABSTRACT

The College of Saint Rose, Albany, New York, conducted surveys about the image of the college with random samples of its students, high school seniors, high school guidance counselors, and the college's faculty and administration. Four similar surveys were developed. The students' surveys had three parts: demographic data, data on the ideal college, and comparison of four area colleges. The staff surveys contained the same sections, but the respondents were asked to respond as they thought students would respond. Based on the findings, four major recommendations were made: the total public relations program of the college should be re-evaluated and strategies should be designed to yield greater awareness of the college in general and to strengthen the college's market position; alternatives for new and/or restructured programs that respond to the interests of high school students should continually be explored; a campus atmosphere that incorporates more of the elements that students believe necessary to college life should be established; and career counseling and job placement services should be made a marketing focus for the college. Specific courses of action were suggested. A copy of the college preference survey for high school seniors is included. (SW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED168400

HE

COLLEGE PREFERENCE SURVEY:

A RESEARCH COMPONENT IN MARKETING

HIGHER EDUCATION

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Ann C. Luciano

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Ann C. Luciano, CSJ
The College of Saint Rose
Albany, New York

The Fifth Annual Conference of
The North East Association for Institutional Research
The Pennsylvania State University
October 12-14, 1978

HE 011 072

As colleges plan for the future with the threat of dwindling enrollments before them, the idea of using marketing techniques becomes more of a reality. At a February 1978 meeting sponsored by NCHEMS, William Dempsey stated, "The major focus in higher education today is on marketing, whether you think of it in terms of financial aid or admissions processes. It really would be useful to segment the market for higher education and find out what realistic potential exists for various institutions in each segment" (p. 3). Ihlanfeldt (1975) states that three basic components in the marketing of higher education are research, strategy, and communication. Using this as a springboard, Hayden, Hill, and Lundblad (1976) go on to say, "Deciding on the type of communications to be used in recruitment is thus dependent on a college's strategy, which is, in turn, based on research" (p. 12).

This was recognized by The College of Saint Rose (CSR), and its Long Range Planning Committee commissioned a subcommittee to investigate, among other things, the image projected by the College. To do this, the Director of Institutional Research was requested to work with this subcommittee composed of 2 faculty members, 2 students, 1 administrator, and the admissions staff. The first step was to articulate a clear statement of purpose for the project. A brainstorming session with the subcommittee resulted in a list of characteristics, both positive and negative, about which we were concerned. It was decided that a survey should be given to random samples of high school seniors, our own students, and high school guidance counselors. It was also suggested by the Long Range Planning Committee itself that CSR faculty and administration be included. Thus, the Director, with the subcommittee acting as critiquers, constructed four very similar surveys, for comparison purposes,

to solicit responses from the four populations mentioned above. The students' surveys had three parts: (1) demographic data, (2) data on the ideal college, and (3) comparison of four area colleges. The other two samples had the same sections but responded to (2) as they thought students would respond. Before distribution, the surveys were field tested by a small number of people to determine if questions were sufficiently clear. Slight changes were made in some of the questions for the sake of clarity. Those testing the survey also kept track of the time it took to complete the survey, so that this information could be conveyed to those administering the high school surveys.

The samples were chosen randomly from the four populations in the following manner. A list of all high schools within a 30 mile radius of The College of Saint Rose was compiled and categorized as to: (1) size: small (approximately 125 in senior class), medium (126-249 in senior class), large (250 or more in senior class); (2) public or private; (3) student flow from the school to CSR: + (some students from this school), ++ (heavy student flow from this school), - (no students from this school). A sample was randomly chosen by means of a Table of Random Numbers. The categorizations were used to insure that at least one of each type of school was in the sample. One of the schools on the alternate sample list had to be chosen to obtain a (-) school. Of the six, 2 were small, 2 medium, 2 large; 5 public, 1 private; 3 +, 2 ++, 1 -. A list of high school guidance counselors was also compiled from the 30 mile radius area, but a straight random sample by means of the Table of Random Numbers was selected. For the CSR students, a printout of all undergraduate students was obtained from data processing. Every fourth name was chosen, eliminating any student who was not a matriculated student. Approximately 25% of our undergraduate matriculated student body received a survey. It was decided that all full-time faculty and administrators plus

a random sample of part-time faculty would constitute the last sample.

Preliminary work was done with high schools during the summer months. First, phone contact was established in each of the six high schools. Most frequently the contact person was the Guidance Director but in some cases it was the principal of the school. All six of the schools on our first sample list accepted the invitation to be a part of our survey. The Director of Admissions and the Director of Institutional Research then set up personal meetings with each of the contact persons at the high school to further explain the project and what was expected of them. All schools opted to distribute the survey during a required class period--all but one school distributed the survey during a required senior English or Social Studies class; the other used an extended Homeroom period. A schedule of drop-off, administration, and pick-up days was determined for each school. The Director of Institutional Research dropped-off and picked-up the surveys for a more personal contact with the individuals involved. The contact persons had staff meetings with those teachers and/or counselors who were to administer the surveys. All other samples received surveys with cover letters via mail--campus or otherwise. A sample of one of the cover letters can be found in the appendix as well as the high school students' survey.

All seniors in school on the day the survey was given completed a survey. There was one problem at the largest high school in the sample. Immediately before the distribution of the surveys, one of the area universities had much press coverage relating to allegations that experiments were being carried on by the psychology department in area schools without proper authorization. Two teachers in the largest school in our high school sample related our survey to that story and refused to administer the survey. Thus, only 44% of the students in that school completed the survey. Approximately 75% of

the seniors in the other schools were present the day the survey was administered and completed one. Finally, we received a total of 846 completed surveys from the high school seniors.

The return rate for the high school guidance counselors was 70% (or 40 counselors), CSR faculty and administration--78% (121), and CSR students--49% (210 students). Responses from CSR students were the hardest to obtain even with two follow-ups.

The results of the completed surveys were numbered and coded by high school, college class, faculty/administrator, guidance counselor. Blanks were coded as a 9 so that they would not be dropped from the total. These were then keypunched and tallied by computer giving frequency and percent. Crosstabulations were also run by various variables to see if there were any differences.

Some of the results of our survey were as follows:

(1) There is more demand for public rather than private education (42% of the potential 4-year college students chose public as compared to 23% choosing private schools; and 50% of those planning to go to any college also chose public education).

(2) Non-church related schools are preferred over church-related institutions (53% of potential 4-year college students chose non-church related versus 5% choosing church-related; this was also 46% of all planning to go to college).

(3) There is a greater demand for 2-year versus 4-year colleges (41% preferred 2-year; 33%--4 year; 15%--no college; 11%--no preference).

(4) High school students prefer medium, i.e., 1,000-3,000 students (41%), coed schools (73%) with minimal or only some regulations (68%).

(5) The following factors were rated as highly important to high school

students in choosing a college. (Percentage is total percentage of potential 4-year college students rating the factor "very important" or "important.")

a. variety of course selection (93%)

b. academic excellence (92%)

c. friendliness (87%)

d. cost (84%)

e. financial aid (79%)

f. career programs/counselling (79%)

g. social life (79%)

h. location (70%)

i. visitation (64%)

(6) The following factors were rated as least important to high school students planning on going to a 4-year college. (Percents represent those rating the factor as "very important" or "important.")

a. Religious opportunities (12%)

b. Fraternities/Sororities (16%)

c. Friends' choice of college (17%)

(7) High school students have a low awareness of most characteristics of all colleges in the survey. The average "don't know" rating was in the high 50 percent range.

(8) Lack of awareness of financial aid, flexibility of programs, and career counselling was particularly high. (72-82% of high school students did not know what specific colleges had to offer.)

(9) Guidance counselors are a significant influence on college choice for high school students. 49% of students planning on 4-year colleges rated their influence "very important" or "important."

(10) In choice of major, students sometimes indicated more than one category. Each one given was counted. The following is a list of those majors listed by 15 or more students:

103 Business
60 Science
39 Secretarial Science
35 Pre-Med, Pre-Dentistry, Lab Tech, Med Tech
32 Accounting
31 Art, Graphic Art, El. Ed. Art
28 Engineering (other than Electrical)
27 Math
26 Nursing
22 Electrical Eng., Electronics, Electricity
22 Communications (Journalism, TV, Radio)
19 Sociology/Social Work
16 Pre-Law (Law)
16 Psychology
15 Mechanics
42 were undecided

There were many other results which give specific information to CSR--especially as to where we stand in relation to the other area colleges mentioned on the survey. No information about the other schools was used in any other way. From both the positive and negative things that we learned about CSR, many recommendations were made to the Long Range Planning Committee. Four major recommendations made were:

1. Re-evaluate our total public relations program. Develop strategies designed to yield increased awareness of CSR in general, and to

strengthen CSR's market position. (There were six concrete actions suggested which might implement this strategy.)

2. Continually explore alternatives for new and/or restructured programs which respond to the interests of high school students. (There were seven concrete actions suggested to implement this strategy.)
3. Establish a campus atmosphere which incorporates more of the elements which students believe are necessary to college life. (Fourteen concrete actions then followed.)
4. Make distinctive career counselling and job placement services a marketing focus for CSR. (Four concrete actions were suggested here.)

There were nine additional recommendations which did not fit into the above four categories. Therefore, the subcommittee made forty recommendations to the Long Range Planning Committee on the basis of the data from this survey. To date, 23 of these are already being implemented. Two have been approved and are in the hands of the appropriate administrator for specific proposals to be sent to the Long Range Planning Committee. Two others are now being discussed with appropriate faculties; seven are to be looked at in the 5-year planning process; and the remaining six are to be put on a later Long Range Planning Committee agenda since some preliminary meetings have to precede their discussion.

The project stretched across an eight month span of time from initial meeting of the subcommittee and Director of Institutional Research to the analysis of data and submission of recommendations to the Long Range Planning Committee. A problem with computer programming really held the project up for one to two months. It is a long time to spend on one project, but the gains in terms of knowledge of concrete actions that a college can take

more than make up for the time invested.

Bibliography

Ihlanfeldt, W. A management approach to the buyer's market. Liberal Education, May 1975, 61, 133-148.

Hayden, M., Hill, M. McL., & Lindblad, M. A. Introduction. In Choice or Chance: Planning for Independent College Marketing and Retention, Report on the admissions and retention phase of Northwest Area Foundation's independent college program 1973-1975. St. Paul, MN: Northwest Area Foundation, 1976.

National Center for Higher Education Management Systems. Priority concerns of administrators in higher education, An NCHEMS progress report. Boulder, Colorado: NCHEMS, September 1978.

CSR THE COLLEGE OF SAINT ROSE
Albany, New York 12203

Dear

During the past few years, The College of Saint Rose has been in a period of growth. However, according to New York State statistics, there will be a 30% decline in college enrollments over the next 15 years. In order to plan for our future and better serve the needs of students, the Long Range Planning Committee has commissioned a series of studies. The purpose of these studies is to gather data on students' ideals concerning choice of college and data on the position of CSR in relation to these ideals. By rating us and some of our neighboring colleges, you can help us determine in which areas we need to put more emphasis.

This survey is one of a four-pronged approach. We are attempting to receive data from high school seniors, high school counselors, college students, and our own faculty and administration. We feel that it is extremely important to gather information from all of these groups to check our perceptions against those of persons outside the college community. Therefore, we ask you to please fill out the following survey.

Your name was randomly selected from a list of Saint Rose faculty and administrators. All questionnaires are anonymous and no mechanism is being employed to jeopardize that anonymity.

Please return your completed survey to me in the envelope provided by Wednesday, October 5, 1977. Thank you for taking the time from your busy schedule to respond to this survey. It is much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sister Ann Carmel Luciano

Sister Ann Carmel Luciano
Director of Institutional Research

SACL:mce

COLLEGE PREFERENCE SURVEY
FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

In each of the following, please circle the appropriate code number for your response or fill in the blank.

1. Sex:
   1. Male
   2. Female

2. Approximate academic rank in class:
   1. Top tenth (0% - 10%)
   2. Second tenth (11% - 20%)
   3. Second fifth (21% - 40%)
   4. Middle fifth (41% - 60%
   5. Fourth fifth (61% - 80%)
   6. Lowest fifth (81% - 100%)

3. BEST ESTIMATE of the total income last year of your parents:
   1. $ 0 - $ 5,999
   2. $ 6,000 - $ 9,999
   3. $10,000 - $14,999
   4. $15,000 - $19,999
   5. $ 20,000 - $24,999
   6. $ 25,000 - $29,999
   7. $ 30,000 - $34,999
   8. $ 35,000 - or more

4. Highest level of formal education obtained by your parents: (Please circle one code number in each column.)

	MOTHER	FATHER
1. Grammar school or less	1	1
2. Some high school	2	2
3. High school graduate	3	3
4. Some college, but less than 4 yrs.	4	4
5. College graduate	5	5
6. Some graduate school	6	6
7. Graduate degree (Masters or Ph.D.)	7	7

5. If one or both of your parents attended college, indicate what type of undergraduate institution each attended. If more than one college was attended, please indicate the type of institution attended for the longest period of time. (Please circle one code number in each column.)

	MOTHER	FATHER
1. Junior college or two-year community college	1	1
2. Private Church-related college	2	2
3. Private non-Church-related college	3	3
4. Public college or university	4	4
5. Other	5	5
6. Did not attend college	6	6

6. What is your current religious preference?
   1. Jewish
   2. Protestant (Other Christian)
   3. Roman Catholic
   4. Other religion
   5. None

7. Do you intend to go to college?
   1. Yes
   2. No**
   3. Undecided

**If you answered No to #7, GO TO PAGE 4. Skip pages 2 and 3.

8. What type of college are you most interested in attending? (Please circle one code number in each lettered category.)

a.	b.	c.
1. Two-year 2. Four-year 3. No Preference	1. Public 2. Private 3. No Preference	1. Church-related 2. Non-Church related 3. No Preference
d.	**e.**	**f.**
1. Coed 2. Single Sex 3. No Preference	1. Near home 2. Away from home 3. No Preference	1. Urban 2. Suburban 3. Rural 4. No Preference
g.	**h.**	
1. Minimal regulations for student life. 2. Some regulations for student life. 3. Many regulations for student life. 4. No Preference.	1. Small (less than 1,000 students). 2. Medium (1,000 to 3,000 students). 3. Large (more than 3,000 students. 4. No Preference	

** Before you go on to the next question, did you circle one number in each of the eight boxed categories above?

9. Do you have any concern about financing your college education?

1. None
2. Some
3. Major concern

10. What do you think your major will be in college? (Please fill in the blank.)

_____

11. What do you anticipate your ultimate career to be? (Please fill in the blank.)

_____

GO ON TO NEXT PAGE

12. How important are the following to you when choosing a college (Please circle one code number in each letter row.)

	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Somewhat Unimportant	Unimportant
a. Athletic Programs/Facilities	1	2	3	4	5
b. Career Programs/Counseling	1	2	3	4	5
c. Cost	1	2	3	4	5
d. Excellence of Academic Programs	1	2	3	4	5
e. Financial Aid	1	2	3	4	5
f. Fraternities/Sororities	1	2	3	4	5
g. Friendliness	1	2	3	4	5
h. Friends' Choice of College	1	2	3	4	5
i. High School Counselor's advice	1	2	3	4	5
j. Involvement of Students in College Life (e.g., Student Government)	1	2	3	4	5
k. Location	1	2	3	4	5
l. Male/Female Ratio	1	2	3	4	5
m. Opportunities for Faculty/Student Interaction	1	2	3	4	5
n. Physical Setting of Campus	1	2	3	4	5
o. Prestige of the School	1	2	3	4	5
p. Religious Opportunities at the School	1	2	3	4	5
q. Size of the School	1	2	3	4	5
r. Small Classes	1	2	3	4	5
s. Social Life	1	2	3	4	5
t. Variety of Course Selections	1	2	3	4	5
u. Visitation (Ability to have person of other sex in your room)	1	2	3	4	5
v. Other (Please specify) _____	1	2	3	4	5

13. Assuming that a college has a good academic program, of the other items listed in Number 12, which TWO most dominate your choice of college (Please write the letter of the items in Number 12 in the blank spaces.)

1. _____
2. _____

GO ON TO NEXT PAGE

The remaining questions pertain to the following four area schools:

College of Saint Rose (St. Rose)
2
3
4

Please put the code number of your response to the following questions in each column for each school.

14. Rate each of the above four area schools on the following points as:

1. Excellent
2. Very Good
3. Good
4. All right
5. Poor
6. Don't Know

Example: Accessibility to local bus lines	St. Rose 2	2 5	3 2	4 3
a. Academic excellence				
b. Athletic programs/activities				
c. Career programs/counseling				
d. Financial Aid				
e. Flexibility of programs				
f. Friendliness				
g. Involvement of students in College life				
h. Male/Female ratio				
i. Overall impression				
j. Prestige				
k. Social life				

15. Rate each of the above four schools as to regulations according to the following scale (Indicate by code number for each school).

1. Minimal regulations for student life
2. Some regulations for student life
3. Many regulations for student life
4. Don't Know

GO ON TO NEXT PAGE

St. Rose 2 3 1

16. For each school indicate how aware you are of what it offers according to the following scale (Indicate by code number for each school).

    1. Very aware of what this school offers overall.
    2. Aware of some of the things this school offers.
    3. Know just a little about this school.
    4. Only know that this school exists.
    5. Don't know anything about this school.

    ____ ____ ____ ____

17. Has your guidance counselor mentioned this school to you? (Indicate by code number for each school).

    1. Yes
    2. No

    ____ ____ ____ ____

18. If you were to apply to these four schools, how would you rank each school in order of your application?
    (1 = would apply to first; 4 = would apply to fourth)

    ____ ____ ____ ____

19. Do you intend to apply to any of these schools? If so, please check which one(s). (If you do not intend to go to college or to apply to any of these schools, please leave all items blank.)

    ____ ____ ____ ____

****

Thank you very much for your time in completing this survey.